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AUTHOR Kaye, Nancy L.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The facilitator's guide is for an inservice training module (5 or 6 hours) on strategies for interaction with severely handicapped students for regular and special education teachers. Suggested activities include a discussion on professional resources, brainstorming on types of interactions possible with the severely handicapped, identification of settings and activities in the local school where teachers or students might interact with severely handicapped students, development of an action plan to insure that a range of possible interactions with severely handicapped students are implemented at a building level, and giving personal priorities to actions the participant can take to further the educational programs of severely handicapped students. Overheads, worksheets, and a lecture on the goal of education are also included. (DE)

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Initiating Change Through Inservice Education:
A Topical Instructional Modules Series

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STRATEGIES FOR INTERACTION WITH SEVERELY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

Nancy L. Kaye
Berkeley Unified School District

Lee Gruenewald
Madison Public Schools

Diane Baumgart
University of Wisconsin-Madison

May 1981

Leonard C. Burrello
Associate Professor
School of Education
Indiana University

Nancy L. Kaye
Director of Special Services
Berkeley, California

Editors

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For additional information about this and other NIN products, please write:

Leonard C. Burrello, Project Director
National Inservice Network
Indiana University
2853 E. 10th Street, Cottage L
Bloomington, Indiana 47405

INTRODUCTION

Public Law 94-142 mandates that severely handicapped students* receive educational services that are age appropriate and least restrictive to the maximum extent possible. In order to be able to actively engage, to the maximum extent possible, in heterogeneous natural environments, severely handicapped students need skills which enable them to interact with nonhandicapped persons. Most severely handicapped students have received their educational training in segregated institutions for the greater part of their lives. Part of their educational training may have attempted to teach them to perform self-help tasks, language skills and possibly even job skills for their later adult life. However, in order to use these skills in natural environments, the severely handicapped student needs to learn to socially interact while performing these skills with people out in natural environments. In the past, educators wrote programs for severely handicapped students with an emphasis on teaching a particular task. The students may have been taught in a one-to-one situation in an isolated environment or in a simulated environment with artificial materials. The programs usually mentioned that the severely handicapped students would need to learn to generalize these skills, that is, be able to use these skills with different people in a variety

*Severely handicapped as the phrase used here, refers to the lowest functioning two percent of our population at any given chronological age.

of situations and times. However, when the severely handicapped students were taken into communities to demonstrate their use of these skills, they often failed miserably. They were then brought back to the simulated environment for more training. It is debatable, however, who failed more -- the trainer or the severely handicapped students.

There are many instances where interactions of severely handicapped students in natural environments are not as successful as possible. For instance, in community stores, many interactions involving both nonhandicapped persons and severely handicapped students are initially uncomfortable. Some are waiting in line together, counting out money and handing it to a person at the checkout who is unknown to the severely handicapped student. For the clerk to receive money from a severely handicapped person, who might need assistance and may be slower than many other people who purchase items, could be equally as difficult. The teachers of severely handicapped classes, after many such initial community interactions, have realized that the interactions in community stores were not as successful as they had anticipated or they might wish. Unless the skills severely handicapped students are taught include skills in social interactions and prepare students to perform them in community stores, etc., many of these same problems may reoccur in other programs.

As regular educators, a question that must be answered is, "What is the role of regular educators in the instruction of severely handicapped students?" The following represent only a few of the roles which regular educators and other mem-

bers of the community contribute to the educational programming of severely handicapped students. Nonhandicapped persons:

A. form a part of the age appropriate, least restrictive environment within which severely handicapped students will be functioning and interacting;

B. are models of the types of interactions and the skills severely handicapped students need to learn in order to perform age appropriate and functional activities in the natural environment; and

C. are evaluators of the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the severely handicapped students' actions and the educational programs which are set up to teach these students appropriate actions.

It is to the advantage of all concerned that the complex of interactive skills essential to successful integration of severely handicapped students with their future employers, co-workers, supervisors, friends and fellow citizens be systematically planned for and initiated as soon as possible. As educators, this then becomes part of our responsibility.

I. Goals and Objectives

The goal of this training session is for participants to increase the range of possible options for working with severely handicapped students in their building.

The objectives are:

1. To increase knowledge of the handicapping conditions of the severely handicapped.
2. To identify possible interaction options with the severely handicapped.
3. To develop an action plan for interacting with the severely handicapped at a building level.

Training Design

The sequence of activities may occur in the following ways:

1. One full day (approximately 5½ hours)
2. Two half-days of 2½-3 hours each, designed as follows:

Activity 1

Purpose: To increase knowledge about both the handicapping conditions of severely handicapped students and the professionals who have expertise in dealing with these problems.

Materials:

1. Handout #1: List of professional resources;
2. Worksheet A with handicapping conditions and professional resources to match up;
3. Worksheet A on transparency; and

4. Overhead projector.

Time: 30 minutes

Process:

1. Read handout #1
2. Individually complete Worksheet A.
3. Trainer leads discussion, citing types of professional assistance.

NOTE: There are a wide variety of professional resources that can be utilized. Emphasis is on matching skills of professionals to problems.

HANDOUT #1

DESCRIPTION OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Audiologist: An expert in, or student of the science of hearing.

Citizen Advocate: A concerned citizen who volunteers to become a friend to a mentally retarded person.

Geneticist: A person trained in genetics or in the understanding of origins and natural growth and genetic inheritance through gene transmission.

Internist: A physician, as distinguished from a surgeon. A person who treats internal diseases, or those of the internal organs not curable by surgery.

Mobility Specialist: A person trained in techniques for helping people with sensory and perceptual deficits move through space.

Neurologist: A physician who has special training in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases involving the central nervous system (i.e., the brain, the spinal cord, and nerves).

Occupational Therapist: A professional who treats persons having physical or mental disabilities through specific types of exercises, work, play, etc., to promote rehabilitation. Relates facilitory and inhibitory techniques to the individual's functional ability. May be referred to as a Developmental Therapist.

Optholmologist: A doctor who specializes in the eye and diseases of the eye.

Orthodontist: A dentist who specializes in the practices of straightening dental structures, aligning the teeth and shaping the jaw using braces in order to bring the teeth into proper relationship to each other.

Orthopedist: A surgeon who deals with diseases and deformities of bones and joints.

Orthotist: A person who is trained in using metals and plastics to construct adaptive equipment, splints, braces and various types of appliances for physically handicapped persons.

Otolaryngolist: A physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and conditions of the ear, nose, and throat.

Parent/Teacher Organization: Parent groups who come together in dealing with special problems related to child rearing through schools or other community agencies. Parenting is a discipline and parents are natural teachers.

Pediatrician: A physician who has specialized in the diagnosis and treatment of the diseases of children, and in the care and development of children.

Pedodontist: A dentist who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the teeth and mouth in children.

Prosthetist: A person who is trained in using plastics and wood in constructing artificial limbs.

Physical Therapist: A professional who treats persons having physical or mental disabilities through specific types of exercises, work, play, etc., to promote rehabilitation. Relates facilitatory and inhibitory techniques to the individual's functional ability. May be referred to as a Developmental Therapist.

Psychiatrist: A physician who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and/or emotional disorders.

Psychologist: A professional trained in the sciences that deal with the mind, mental functioning processes, behavior and psychopathology.

Special Educator: A professional having expertise in curriculum and management of children with exceptional educational needs (home/trainer) and/or a person specializing in behavioral disorders.

Social Worker: A professional who works with other professionals in helping persons and their families to overcome social, emotional and environmental problems. They provide services, resources and programs and develop an atmosphere that enables children and youth to make an appropriate life adjustment.

Speech and Language Clinician: A professional person who treats persons with speech and language disorders.

Speech Pathologist: A professional person who is engaged in the study of the disorders of speech and language.

Respiratory Therapist: A professional with special training and knowledge in the area of mechanical breathing apparatus and medication related to pulmonary function.

Regular Educator: A professional trained to teach students who learn within regular education programs and refer students who need additional help and evaluate the effectiveness of additional instruction.

Not all professionals in these categories will have the expertise to answer questions related to individuals with severely/profoundly handicapping conditions. One should ask the extent of that professional experience with such persons, so as to provide perspective on the accuracy of the answers given.

WORKSHEET A

HANDICAPPING CONDITION	PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE(S)
The severely handicapped student has a problem in chewing and swallowing solid food.	_____
The severely handicapped student is often unintelligible when verbalizing to other adults and peers.	_____
A slight tremor of the foot or hand is noted. May interfere with the severely handicapped student's attempts to ambulate or grasp an object.	_____
The severely handicapped student may appear to be staring off into space and doesn't always respond to voices, sounds, or touching.	_____
Dressing is very difficult for this student.	_____
The severely handicapped student doesn't "remember" where objects are usually kept or how to get to certain other rooms in the school or other buildings.	_____
The body movements of the severely handicapped student are very awkward and often rigid.	_____
Sometimes the severely handicapped student makes loud noises and is disruptive.	_____
The severely handicapped student doesn't seem to be able to keep his head in an upright position.	_____

WORKSHEET A (continued)

HANDICAPPING CONDITION	PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE(S)
The severely handicapped student may poke his eyes and wave his hands in front of his eyes.	_____
This severely handicapped student has difficulty in balancing and walking and can stand only with support.	_____
Bladder control and toilet training is still a problem for this student.	_____
The muscle tone of this severely handicapped student is described as hypotonic. The student also looks to be overweight.	_____
This student drools.	_____
This severely handicapped student doesn't look at people when they speak to her and her eyes don't always follow objects when they move in her field of vision.	_____
This student makes vocal clicking sounds often, even when watching television.	_____
This severely handicapped student has never made many sounds, and has said no words that the adults who interact with him can remember.	_____

Activity 2

Purpose: To identify and categorize some of the common interactions that are possible:

1. proximal,
2. helping,
3. service,
4. reciprocal, and
5. other.

Materials: Sufficient numbers of copies of worksheet B, worksheet B transparency; overhead pencil, overhead projector.

Time: 40 minutes

Process:

1. Review Handout #2 individually (10 minutes);
2. In small groups brainstorm examples of each type of interaction. (total time for four types 20 minutes). NOTE: examples of each type are included on Worksheet B (for transparency).

   Directions: Think of all the proximal interactions you had yesterday. List the interactions on Worksheet B. Then list four helping interactions you have been involved in this week, four service interactions you have had today, and four reciprocal interactions you have had today. These interactions may or may not have included the severely handicapped.
3. Discussion related to the range of potential interactions that people have (10 minutes).

HANDOUT #2

DEFINITIONS OF SOME MAJOR TYPES OF INTERACTIONS

An interaction will be defined in this context as a mutual or reciprocal action. The definition implies that there are at least two people involved in the interaction and they each acknowledge the other person in some manner. An interaction might be: looking at or observing others, standing near someone, talking to someone, or assisting another person.

There are at least four types of interactions to be considered:

1) proximal interactions,

2) helping interactions,

3) service interactions, and

4) reciprocal interactions.

Each type of interaction is defined and examples are given to illustrate the interaction process.

1. Proximal Interactions: Most of the people who are sitting next to each other and taking lecture notes here are engaging in at least a proximal interaction. That is, proximal interactions refer to being in close proximity to another person and noting (whether it's visual tactual, auditory, etc.) that another person is near. Proximal interactions that might frequently occur are:

a) seeing a severely handicapped person on the bus;

b) hearing a conversation between severely handicapped students behind you in a grocery checkout counter; and

c) watching a severely handicapped student playing at the park.

2. Helping Interactions: This type of interaction refers to helping another person or offering assistance to another person. The assistance may be physical, or verbal, or gestural, etc., and is given by one person in order to help another person perform some skill. In the case of severely handicapped students we might engage in helping interactions by:

a) verbally reminding a severely handicapped student to line up when the recess bell rings;

b) physically assisting a severely handicapped student in maneuvering through a turnstyle in a department store; and

c) gesturally pointing to the art classroom when the severely handicapped student is in the school hallway looking for the art room.

3. Service Interactions: Service interactions involve one person performing a job or a service action and interacting with another person while performing that job or service. Examples of service interactions that educators might perform during the school day may include:

a) handing a severely handicapped student a lunch ticket;

b) signing a hall pass for a severely handicapped person; and

c) disciplining a severely handicapped student for inappropriate playground behavior.

4. Reciprocal Interactions: Reciprocal interactions involve a mutual exchange between two people with possibly the

same or different resulting benefits. Two students might choose each other to play a game during recess and thus engage in a reciprocal interaction. In a school situation, reciprocal interactions between nonhandicapped and severely handicapped students might include:

a) a severely handicapped student and a nonhandicapped student socializing in the school halls or lunch line;

b) a regular educator and a severely handicapped student saying "hi" as they pass in the halls; and

c) two nonhandicapped students asking a severely handicapped person to sit with them during lunch.

In each of the above examples, the interactions are probably easier and more enjoyable if all the persons involved:

a) have knowledge about each other;

b) acknowledge and act in accordance with the differences and similarities of each person; and

c) acquire the necessary skills to engage in the interactions.

Through these types of interactions both nonhandicapped and severely handicapped persons can learn about each other. Severely handicapped students whose educational programs are based in regular public schools rather than segregated facilities have many more opportunities for interacting with nonhandicapped persons which can contribute to their:

a) engaging in appropriate and relatively functional and efficient interactions;

b) participating in more longitudinal and more varied interactions in natural environments;

c) observing and modeling the interaction skills non-handicapped people perform;

d) performing interactions more appropriately in later adult environments -- with bus drivers, employers, co-workers, and store clerks; and

e) utilizing their full potential as citizens to enjoy the environments and interactions most of us enjoy.

Nonhandicapped persons also have more opportunities for learning when severely handicapped people are integrated into the public schools and community environments. They have opportunities to:

a) learn crucial skills necessary to interacting with severely handicapped persons;

b) learn important aspects of professionals who are employed to work with severely handicapped persons, such as physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, adaptive physical education instructors, nurses, doctors, special educators, genetic counselors and others;

c) develop an interest and work with severely handicapped persons;

d) engage in positive and constructive interactions that are facilitated in the public school educational settings;

e) acquire knowledge about the many possible causes of severe handicapping conditions; and

f) learn about a minority population of citizens that previously have been isolated for most of their daily environments.

In order for both severely handicapped and nonhandicapped individuals to successfully interact in public school settings and later in adult settings, educators must systematically plan for and provide opportunities for at least all of the four types of interactions listed above.

WORKSHEET B (transparency)

Proximal Interactions

1. Waving to a friend
2. Reading newspaper in the teacher's lounge at break
3. Watching a movie at a theater.

Helping Interactions

1. Holding the door open for the delivery person.
2. Pointing to an item a student is looking for

Service Interactions

1. Sending a student to the principal's office for discipline.
2. Answering a parent's question over the telephone.

Reciprocal Interactions

1. Talking to a group of students on the playground
2. Smiling at another teacher in the hallway, who then waves back.

Other

1. Talking on the telephone.
2. Stealing money from a purse.

WORKSHEET B

Proximal Interactions

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Helping Interactions

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Service Interactions

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Reciprocal Interactions

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Activity 3

Purpose: Delineate possible interactions, settings, and activities in your local school where you and your students might interact with severely handicapped students.

Materials: Worksheet C (handout)

Overhead transparency worksheet C, blank overhead, overhead projector, and overhead pencil.

Time: 20 minutes to write out interactions

20 minutes to discuss examples and possible concerns.

Process:

1) Have sufficient numbers of Worksheet C to hand out.

Directors: Identify as many interactions as possible that might occur in your building. Include different types of interactions that might occur as well as citing where, when, and how the interaction might occur.

a) the settings within the school building and on the school grounds where interactions occur;

b) the many different people within the building with whom the interactions occur;

c) the different types of actions and skills such as gestures, talking, "just" waiting (always a hard one to teach!), watching, etc.;

d) the many different times within the day, the duration of, and the number of people involved in the interaction.

2) Request participants to recite some of their examples. List examples on an overhead and discuss the following variables related to the occurrence of interactions:

WORKSHEET C

	Interactions between severely handicapped students and	Proximal	Helping	Service	Reciprocal	Other
EDUCATIONAL BUILDING STAFF	1) Saying "hi" to each other in the hallways;				X	
	2) Watching the activities of each other on the school playground;	X				
NON-HANDICAPPED STUDENTS	1) Waiting in the cafeteria line for lunch;	X				
	2) Walking together on the playground;	X			X	
	3) Riding the school bus together;	X			X	
	4) Severely handicapped students getting assistance with a wheelchair going into school from the school bus.		X			
VOLUNTEERS, PARENTS AND SCHOOL BUILDING NEIGHBORS, ETC.	1) Watching the severely handicapped student going to school with friends;	X				
	2) Assisting a "lost" student;		X			
	3) Acting as a crossing guard and offering street crossing assistance.			X		

WORKSHEET C

Interactions between severely handicapped students and

Proximal	VOLUNTEERS, PARENTS AND SCHOOL BUILDING NEIGHBORS, ETC.	NONHANDICAPPED STUDENTS	EDUCATIONAL BUILDING STAFF
Helping			
Service			
Reciprocal			
Other			

Activity 4

Purpose: To develop an action plan to insure that a range of possible interactions with severely handicapped students and their corrective procedures are implemented at a building level.

Materials:

1) Worksheets D, E, F;
2) Worksheets D, E, and F on overhead transparencies;
3) Overhead; and
4) Overhead pencil.

Time: 90 minutes

Process:

1) Discuss some example problem interactions, correction procedures and antecedent events such as those listed on worksheets E and F.
2) The participants will break up into small groups of 5-7 people. Each person in the group will fill out a worksheet. After approximately 15 - 20 minutes of writing the individual group members will decide on:
   a) a problem interaction and a correction procedure that they will role play to the rest of the groups; and
   b) recommend an antecedent event, such as PTO meetings to discuss the possible problems, planned exchanges between nonhandicapped and severely

handicapped classes, etc., which might have helped to prevent the problem interaction.

Problem Interactions

1. Nonhandicapped persons feeling embarrassed because they are unsure as to how to interact with a severely handicapped person.
2. A severely handicapped person acting inappropriately in the school hallway.
3. A special education teacher feeling his/her students are causing others to feel uncomfortable.
4. Severely handicapped students being teased.
5. Severely handicapped students getting special privileges without an assessment being done to determine if the privileges are warranted.
6. Parents of nonhandicapped students protesting that severely handicapped students will be "mainstreamed" rather than integrated and the educational standards of the school will be lowered.
7. Parents of severely handicapped students forming a separate "PTO" from parents of nonhandicapped students, or becoming isolated in school meetings as "special parents" only.

WORKSHEET D

POSSIBLE "NEGATIVE" INTERACTIONS

severely handicapped student ⟷ nonhandicapped person

e.g., is walking down the hall ⟷ teases the severely handicapped student and others laugh at him

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

_____

nonhandicapped person ⟷ severely handicapped student

e.g., shows the severely handicapped student a baseball card ⟷ drools on the baseball card

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

5. _____

WORKSHEET E

POSSIBLE HELPFUL ANTECEDENT EVENTS

e.g.,: Set up a severely handicapped student/nonhandicapped student buddy system on the playground before problems arise there

e.g.,: Arrange "buddy" partners with whom the severely handicapped student can walk to and from school or a buddy to assist the severely handicapped student in getting from the bus to the playground, etc.

e.g.,: The PTO might set up a BLOCK PERSON network whereby homeowners who display a certain symbol are willing and prepared to offer assistance to any child needing help either in going to or coming from school.

1. _____

_____

_____

_____

2. _____

_____

_____

_____

3. _____

_____

_____

_____

4. _____

_____

_____

_____

5. _____

_____

_____

WORKSHEET F

CORRECTION PROCEDURES that might help remediate in a situation where a negative interaction is occurring.

e.g.,: a) Physically assisting a severely handicapped student to play "catch" with a nonhandicapped student who has thrown a ball and wishes to play catch with the severely handicapped student.

b) Showing a nonhandicapped student how to help a severely handicapped student who has fallen down and needs assistance while on the playground.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

WORKSHEET F (continued)

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

Activity 5

Purpose: To prioritize the following actions in the order in which the participant feels able to be involved in the educational programs of severely handicapped students.

Materials:

1) Worksheet G;
2) Summary Sheet G (for overhead);
3) overhead projector;
4) overhead pencil.

Time: 30 minutes: a) 10 minutes to prioritize
b) 10 minute break
c) 10 minutes to review group priotities

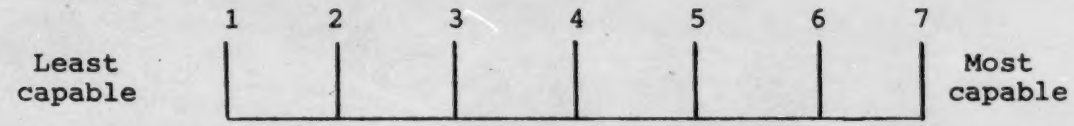
Process: Individually the participants will anonymously prioritize the actions on Worksheet G and then turn them in to the activity manager.

The activity manager will add the priority numbers listed for each action, divide by the number of respondents who prioritized the action, and determine the average priority listing.

The average priority listing for each action will then be shared with the participants. The priorities may be utilized in evaluating the increase in skills and knowledge gained from the inservice process.

WORKSHEET G

PRIORITIZE the following actions from 1 (most capable of performing) to 7 (least capable of performing). Use the following priority scale:



_____ Teach a severely handicapped student a skill.

_____ Tell nonhandicapped persons about some of the educational needs of severely handicapped students.

_____ Answer questions of nonhandicapped parents about the integrated school setting for nonhandicapped and severely handicapped students.

_____ Engage in a proximal,

_____ helping,

_____ service,

_____ reciprocal interaction with a severely handicapped student.

Assist nonhandicapped students/other staff to engage in a

_____ proximal,

_____ helping,

_____ service,

_____ reciprocal interaction with a severely handicapped student.

_____ Team teach a class or period with a special educator which contains both nonhandicapped and severely handicapped students.

_____ Ask questions of professional staff about the handicapping conditions of or remediation techniques used with severely handicapped students.

_____ Intervene when a problem arises in a situation which involves a severely handicapped student and a nonhandicapped student.

_____ Refer a person who asks a question about a handicapping condition to the relevant profession(s).

_____ Advocate for educational services for severely handicapped students.

_____ Evaluate the appropriateness or inappropriateness of actions of severely handicapped students.

_____ Evaluate the appropriateness or inappropriateness of actions of nonhandicapped students.

INSERVICE EVALUATION

Inservice: _____

Inservice Manager: _____

Date: _____

1 2 3 4 5

Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

Inservice

_____ Clear goals

_____ Relatedness of content to goals

_____ Appropriateness of activities

_____ Appropriateness of readings and lecture

_____ Value in professional preparation

_____ Evaluation Procedures

Lecturer/Activities Manager

_____ Preparedness

_____ Knowledge of field

_____ Ability to communicate with participants

_____ Ability to generate interest in subject matter

_____ Ability to answer questions

COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS INDICATING WHAT YOU LIKED MOST ABOUT THIS COURSE:

COMMENTS INDICATING WHAT YOU LIKED LEAST OR POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT SUGGESTIONS:

Day 1

A. Priority Activity		15 minutes
B. Lecture		30 minutes
C. Activities:	1	30 minutes
	2	40 minutes
	3	40 minutes

Day 2

A. Activities:	4	2 hours
	5	20 minutes
B. Inservice Evaluation		10 minutes

Target Audience:

Regular education and special education teachers, administrators, and other educational building staff.

Procedure:

Session 1 may be given to a large group, or a school district.

Session 2 is to be given at the building level(s) to school building staff.

II. Lecture

What is the Goal of Education?

Most of us as regular educators would agree that education needs to prepare students to function to their maximum potential. The success of educational programs for most students can be determined by standardized test scores and the students' later abilities to perform adequately as adults working in communities, raising families, and finding life enjoyable.

For severely handicapped students, the goal of education is the same! Educational programs for these students need to maximize their potential for participating in at least the following activities: home living, working, recreational/leisure activities, and general community functioning. Severely handicapped students, however, have certain handicapping conditions which necessitate their receiving specialized services. By severely handicapped, we mean the lowest functioning two percent of our population at any given chronological age. Persons described as severely or profoundly retarded, autistic, deaf and blind, etc., fit this definition. Handicapped conditions may involve orthopedic, mental, emotional, or medical differences which make it hard or more difficult to perform certain activities. Thus, severely handicapped students may participate in activities in different ways than nonhandicapped persons, but this does not mean that the extent or the range of the activities or environments in

which they perform must be limited or restricted. Historically, we have limited the life spaces and activities of severely handicapped students. We have limited them to living in institutions around the world. We have isolated them in separate living arrangements in communities. And, we have provided special camps and jobs in which they work and place.

Public Law 94-142 demands we change. It demands programs in which severely handicapped students have the opportunities to perform the same activities we perform, in the same places we perform, and at approximately the same chronological ages at which we performed these activities.

WHY? An historical perspective is needed in order to evaluate why these program changes are necessary. Many institutional programs and segregated public facilities attempt to teach skills to severely handicapped students.

For example, in one segregated public school, severely handicapped adolescents were involved in a program to teach purchasing skills. A school store was set up, supplied with items a student might find in a grocery store, and the students were initially taught to: 1) identify and discriminate coins (pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters); 2) count coins and money of up to a one dollar value (using combinations of the above listed coins); and 3) recognize money values printed on items of up to one dollar in value. And, in the school store the students did really well! They pointed out the item they wanted in the store, counted out the money, gave the money to the teacher, and got the item. But, why teach this skill unless the students will get a chance to use it where we use

the skills, the grocery store? The teachers in the school thought so, too.

The students were taken on a field trip to a local grocery store where they could buy an item and this is where the program fell apart. These severely handicapped adolescents had rarely been in a community grocery store. There were a lot of distractions in the store; a lot of strange people, a lot more items than in their little school store, and a lot of people in the store who had never seen a severely handicapped person before and did not know how to react. In addition, they had been taught to count out coins to pay for an item. In school, the important consideration in counting out the coins was to get the right amount. In the grocery store, this was only one of many considerations at the checkout counter. In the real grocery store, the students needed to count out the coins at a relatively fast rate so as not to hold up the checkout line. They could not rely on the checkout clerk to tell them they had the right amount, or to praise them for counting out the right amount of money. In addition to the large number of skills associated with just paying for the item correctly there were a large number of social interactions which were not taught in the simulated store. Waiting in line with strangers, asking for information from a stranger, and performing the correct actions when a clerk might say, "That will be 97 cents," or "97 cents, please," or just look at the student and wait for the money. Then, of course there are always those change return machines

which give change, rather than the clerk handing over the change!

Some of the problems both the teachers and students encountered were due to the variety and complexities of the natural world which severely handicapped people have rarely been exposed to. And, part of the problem has to do with the fact that severely handicapped students and nonhandicapped people do not know how to interact with each other. What do severely handicapped students and their teachers do after this trip to the grocery store? Do they go back to the simulated school store and practice more? Do they change the program and attempt to teach these students the skills they will need in real grocery stores? Programs have been written to teach these skills in real grocery stores (Wheeler, et. al., 1979) and the data from these programs for severely handicapped students indicate that given instruction <u>in</u> natural situations, the real grocery, these severely handicapped students can perform quite adequately there. They may need adaptive devices. They may need specialized personnel to train them. They may need more time in which to learn these skills, but, they can and do learn the skills. But, they also need <u>YOU</u> to accomplish this.

<u>WHY YOU</u>? What do I, as a regular educator, have to do with the education of the severely handicapped student? The teachers of the severely handicapped and administrators of these programs are not asking you to teach the skills these students need, but we are asking you to interact with these students and to evaluate how these students are doing in non-

isolated environments.

If anything, a goal of this inservice is to have all of you believe that there are no severely handicapped behaviors. There are people with handicapping conditions who are labeled severely handicapped. But the behaviors that these people often have (e.g., giggling while waiting in line, talking to strangers, picking their noses) are not behaviors that these people have to have. Imagine yourself in an environment where the only people you see are people with handicapping conditions, or people who take care of you, and then imagine yourself going out into the community. What a surprise! And, that "surprise" is a part of the problem.

Let's consider the following types of interactions, identified by Brown and others (1979): (PUT OVERHEAD 1 ON HERE) proximal interactions, where we acknowledge another person is there; helping interactions where we offer assistance to another person; service interactions, where we receive a service from another person due to his job or occupation; and reciprocal interactions, where some interactive exchange occurs between people. These basically are the interactions which you and I engage in during our day and these are the interactions which severely handicapped students must learn in order to interact with us in the natural environments.

We will be passing out handouts that further explain these interactions after the lecture, and there will be more discussion on the types of interactions then.

Right now, let us consider just the variety of interactions. Most of us have become quite adept at saying "hi"

to our friends, listening to them talk about their day and telling them about ours. However, how many of us find it comfortable to decide to go to the movies by ourselves and not think while we are waiting in line for the ticket or trying to find a seat, that other people are staring at us, wondering why we are there alone? The point here is that the types of interactions are not necessarily forming a hierarchy from easy to hard or from good to better. Severely handicapped students need experiences in interacting in all these types of interactions. It is not that one interaction is better than another type of interaction, but rather, that in a specified situation, one type of interaction is more appropriate than another interaction. If adults who go to the movie theater engage in proximal interactions (that is, sit in the theater possibly next to another person and watch the movie), then severely handicapped students need to learn to go to the movie theater and sit next to a stranger without talking to that stranger during the movie. In other words, they need to learn that in this situation a proximal interaction is acceptable and a reciprocal or service interaction is not acceptable. (REMOVE OVERHEAD 1 HERE)

In considering the educational needs of severely handicapped students, special educators have decided that in planning these programs they must look to the future environments of the severely handicapped students. It is too late if a severely handicapped student has his first exposure to a public school program, to a community restaurant, or to a home

living situation when he is fourteen or fifteen. These students and nonhandicapped students, in order to effectively interact as adults, need to learn to interact with each other as soon as possible. Thus, it is logical for severely handicapped students to attend a public school where nonhandicapped students are already attending. Institutions and isolated public school facilities do not offer many opportunities for interaction. Thus, special educators and severely handicapped students NEED YOU AND YOUR INTERACTIONS in order to learn and effectively program for later adult interactions. Without daily opportunities for a variety of interactions, it is reasonable to assume that both nonhandicapped persons and severely handicapped persons will remain strangers to each other.

And since we are all such nice people, it seems a shame that we cannot get to know each other!

During the rest of this session we will explore ways in which we can get to know each other.

APPENDIX A

Overhead for Lecture

OVERHEAD 1

TYPES OF INTERACTION

-- PROXIMAL

-- HELPING

-- SERVICE

-- RECIPROCAL

APPENDIX B

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